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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information

AND-11-41

Jan. 24, 1941

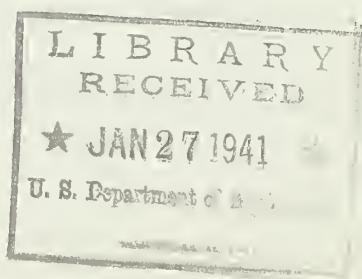
Part I - STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

BELGIUM: All indications are that the provisioning of Belgium is approaching its critical point and that assistance from Germany in getting supplies will be rendered only if Belgium cooperates with the occupation authorities in the establishment of the planned "new order." The Military Administration in Belgium conferred with Belgian business leaders and urged them to cooperate with the occupying authorities in the program for restoring Belgian economic life and foreign trade, and particularly for insuring the food supply of the population. It was announced that a commission would shortly be sent to Berlin with a view to discussing the Belgian food situation and that the Reich Ministry had agreed to use its good offices to arrange for the reception in Moscow of a Belgian delegation to negotiate for foodstuffs. The Military Administration emphasized, however, that help from Germany to bridge the gap until the next crop is harvested need not be expected unless energetic measures are taken by Belgian officials to eliminate hoarding by consumers, profiteering by illegal food traders, the failure of farmers to turn in their crops, and the mockery by the consuming public of the rationing schedule.

DENMARK: Numerous factories must close shortly because of the depletion of stocks of raw materials. Effective January 1, soap was rigidly rationed. Rationing of clothing is expected in the near future. Considerable difficulties are anticipated in the near future unless the very low fuel supplies are replenished. There is as yet no evidence of a shortage in vital foodstuffs, though prices have increased in all lines. During 1940 the number of milk cows was reduced by 8 percent and the number of young cattle by 15 to 20 percent. Poultry numbers were reduced by 66 percent and hog numbers by 40 percent.





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Part II - FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE

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AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

RED CROSS SHIPS FARM PRODUCTS FOR EUROPEAN RELIEF. Red Cross shipments of American farm products for relief abroad will reach substantial totals this month. A ship destined for Greece will carry 20,000 barrels of wheat flour, 385 tons of dried fruit, 450 tons of rolled oats, 332 tons of cracked rice, 350 tons of powdered and evaporated milk, 100,000 cotton blankets, 32 tons of dehydrated soup, and supplies of fruit juice and syrup. Another ship will carry 51,430 barrels of flour and 500 tons of powdered and canned milk for Spain, and 750 tons of powdered and canned milk for unoccupied France.

DEPARTMENT EXPERTS HELP BUY MORE LAND FOR ARMY. Members of the Land Acquisition Division of the Soil Conservation Service are helping the Army acquire land as follows: at Fort McClellan, Alabama, 26,500 acres for maneuvering grounds; at Pine Plains, N. Y., 18 tracts inside the present boundaries of the Pine Plains Military Reservation; at Spartanburg, S. C., 2,000 acres for a new camp for infantry replacements; in Gibson and Carroll Counties, Tenn., 21,000 acres for a new ordnance loading plant; in Talladega County, Ala., 28,200 acres for two new munitions plants; at Clarksburg, Ind., 34,000 acres adjacent to a powder plant for storing ammunition.

FOREST SERVICE DISCOVERY TO SPEED PLANNED PRODUCTION. A new drying process developed by the Forest Products Laboratory at Madison, Wisconsin, will cut by one-half the time required to season and dry Sitka spruce, the wood used in the manufacture of training planes and, at the same time, will insure a much larger percentage of usable lumber by eliminating most of the surface "checking" formerly resulting from kiln drying.

The new method, involving a preliminary soaking in a chemical bath, will reduce to 15 days the process that has hitherto required 35 days to turn green wood into seasoned lumber, ready to be used in a plane. During the first world war the Forest Products Laboratory worked out the kiln drying process which cut to 35 days the previous seasoning time of a year.

FOREST SERVICE INSPECTORS LOANED TO PLANE FACTORY. Thomas Wilson and Alan Freas of the Forest Products Laboratory have been detailed to the Stinson Airplane factory at Wayne, Michigan to supervise the inspection of lumber to be used in planes and train a staff of the Stinson factory's regular inspectors.

DEPARTMENT NITRATE SPECIALIST JOINS DEFENSE COMMISSION. Dr. Philip H. Groggins, of the Bureau of Agricultural Chemistry and Engineering, has been loaned to the Agricultural Division of the Defense Commission to have charge of a new agricultural chemicals division. The division will be concerned with the production of all chemicals which can be used for agriculture, as well as the use of agricultural products in industry.

SUMMARY OF FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS: GERMANY: The new trade agreement with Russia, signed January 10, 1941, extends the pact of February 11, 1940 and broadens its provision relative to exchange of goods. The new agreement runs until August 1, 1942. Germany agrees to deliver increased amounts of industrial equipment in exchange for substantially increased quantities of Russian industrial raw materials (especially petroleum products and manganese) and foodstuffs. The German press points out that the new agreement renders "more illusory than ever the aims of the British blockade" and that it provides for the delivery to Germany of "the largest quantity of bread and feed grains ever agreed upon in the history of intergovernmental agreements." Larger Russian deliveries of cotton together with greatly increased deliveries of flax are also promised.

SLOVAKIA: Indications are that the Slovak Import and Export Corporation has arranged with the Soviet Union for the delivery of 3,000 tons of Russian cotton, payment for which is to be made in American dollars.

ARGENTINA: Russia has made purchases of fine crossbred wool and there are rumors of additional purchases.

UNITED KINGDOM: Authorities and trade officials are reported to be discussing a plan for the organization of imports of all growths of cotton on the basis of shipping facilities and spinners' needs. The trade anticipates monthly import quotas for various growths with merchants receiving individual allotments.

